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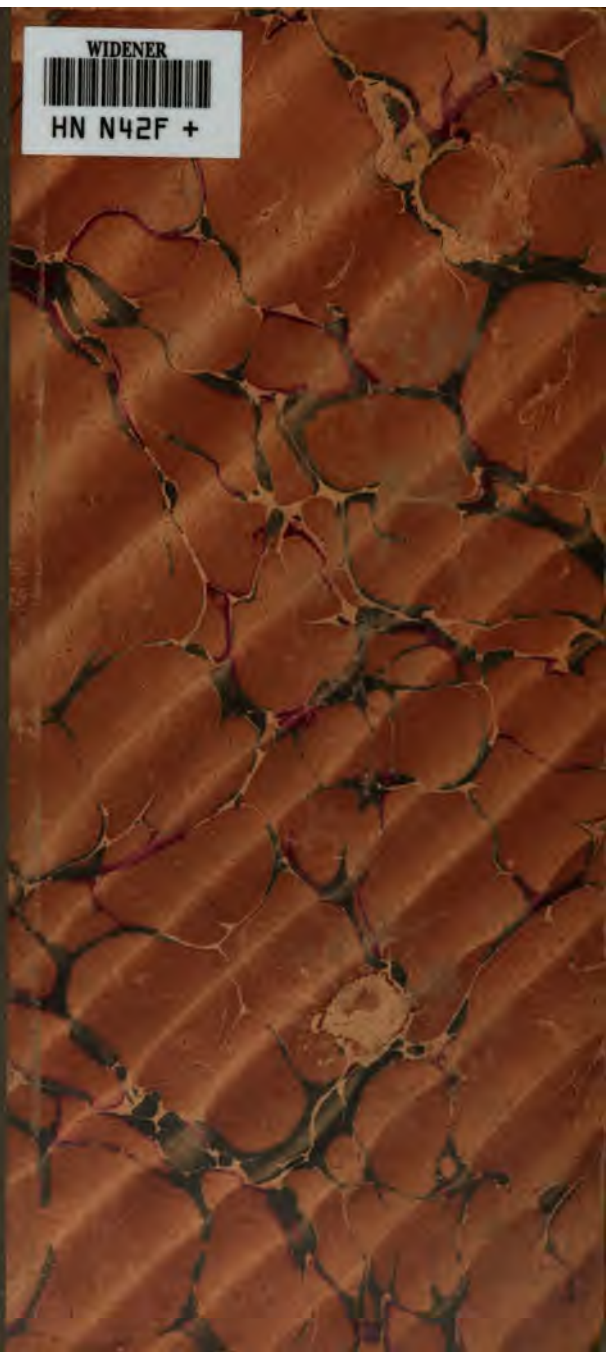
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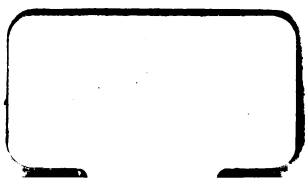
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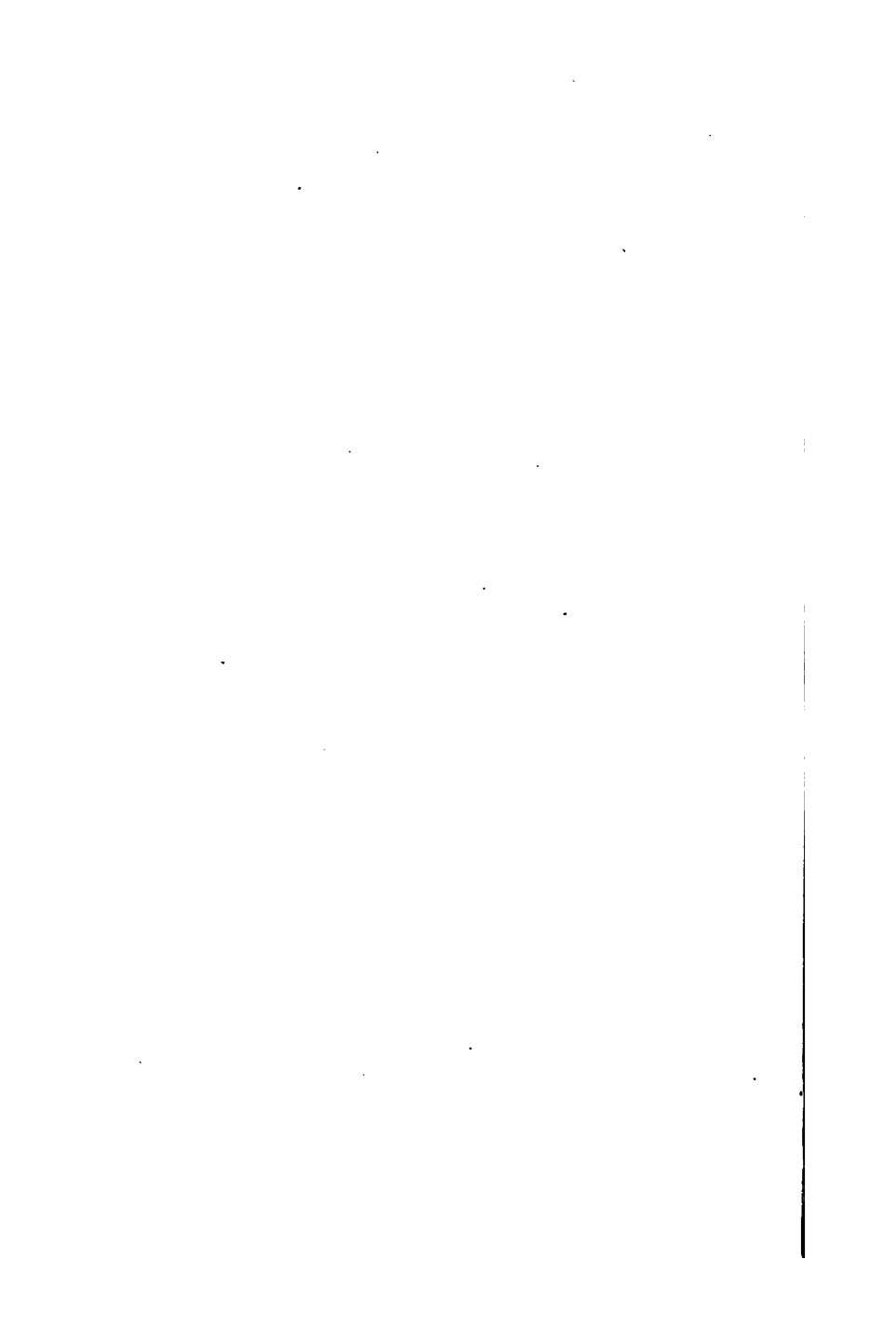
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HOME BALLADS.



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• HOME BALLADS

BY OUR

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"INFINITE RICHES IN A LITTLE ROOM."

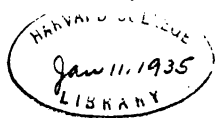
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1865.

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Charles F. Batchelder

Isabella B. B. B. B.

Isabella B. B. B. B.

Isabella B. B. B. B.

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HOME BALLADS.

DRIVING HOME THE COWS.

Out of the clover and blue-eyed grass
He turned them into the river lane;
One after another he let them pass,
Then fastened the meadow bars again.

Under the willows, and over the hill,
He patiently followed their sober pace;
The merry whistle for once was still,
And something shadowed the sunny face.

Only a boy! and his father had said
He never could let his youngest go;
Two already were lying dead
Under the feet of the trampling foe.

But after the evening work was done,
And the frogs were loud in the meadow swamp,
Over his shoulder he slung his gun
And stealthily followed the foot-path damp:

Across the clover and through the wheat,
With resolute heart and purpose grim,
Though cold was the dew on his hurrying feet,
And the blind bat's flitting startled him.

Thrice since then had the lanes been white,
And the orchards sweet with apple-bloom;
And now, when the cows came back at night,
The feeble father drove them home.

For news had come to the lonely farm'
That three were lying where two had lain;
And the old man's tremulous, palsied arm
Could never lean on a son's again.

The summer day grew cool and late:
He went for the cows when the work was done;
But down the lane, as he opened the gate,
He saw them coming one by one:

Brindle, Ebony, Speckle, and Bess,
Shaking their horns in the evening wind,
Cropping the butter-cups out of the grass;
But who was it following close behind?

Loosely swung in the idle air
The empty sleeve of army blue;
And worn and pale, from the crisping hair,
Looked out a face that the father knew.

For Southern prisons will sometimes yawn,
And yield their dead unto life again;
And the day that comes with a cloudy dawn,
In golden glory at last may wane.

The great tears sprang to their meeting eyes;
For the heart must speak when the lips are dumb:
And under the silent evening skies
Together they followed the cattle home.

Harper's Magazine.



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THE PLANTING OF THE APPLE-TREE.

COME, let us plant the apple-tree.
Cleave the tough greensward with the spade;
Wide let its hollow bed be made;
There gently lay the roots, and there
Sift the dark mould with kindly care,
And press it o'er them tenderly,
As, round the sleeping infant's feet
We softly fold the cradle-sheet;
So plant we the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Buds, which the breath of summer days
Shall lengthen into leafy sprays;
Boughs where the thrush, with crimson breast,
Shall haunt and sing and hide her nest;
We plant, upon the sunny lea,
A shadow for the noontide hour,
A shelter from the summer shower,
When we plant the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree
Sweets for a hundred flowery springs,
To load the May-wind's restless wings,
When, from the orchard-row, he pours
Its fragrance through our open doors;
A world of blossoms for the bee,
Flowers for the sick girl's silent room,
For the glad infant sprigs of bloom,
We plant with the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Fruits that shall swell in sunny June,
And redden in the August noon,
And drop, when gentle airs come by
That fan the blue September sky ;

While children come, with cries of glee,
And seek them where the fragrant grass
Betrays their bed to those who pass,
At the foot of the apple-tree.

And when, above this apple-tree,
The winter stars are quivering bright,
And winds go howling through the night,
Girls, whose young eyes o'erflow with mirth,
Shall peel its fruit by cottage-hearth ;

And guests in prouder homes shall see,
Heaped with the grape of Cintra's vine,
And golden orange of the line,
The fruit of the apple-tree.

The fruitage of this apple-tree
Winds, and our flag of stripe and star,
Shall bear to coasts that lie afar,
Where men shall wonder at the view,
And ask in what fair groves they grew ;

And sojourners beyond the sea
Shall think of childhood's careless day,
And long, long hours of summer play,
In the shade of the apple-tree.

Each year shall give this apple-tree
A broader flush of roseate bloom,
A deeper maze of verdurous gloom,
And loosen, when the frost-clouds lower,

The crisp brown leaves in thicker shower.

The years shall come and pass, but we
Shall hear no longer, where we lie,
The Summer's songs, the Autumn's sigh,
In the boughs of the apple-tree.

And time shall waste this apple-tree.
Oh, when its aged branches throw
Thin shadows on the ground below,
Shall fraud and force and iron will
Oppress the weak and helpless still?

What shall the tasks of Mercy be,
Amid the toils, the strifes, the tears
Of those who live when length of years
Is wasting this apple-tree?

"Who planted this old apple-tree?"
The children of that distant day
Thus to some aged man shall say;
And, gazing on its mossy stem,
The gray-haired man shall answer them:

"A poet of the land was he,
Born in the rude but good old times;
'Tis said he made some quaint old rhymes
On planting the apple-tree."

William Cullen Bryant.

A PICTURE.

THE farmer sat in his easy chair
Smoking his pipe of clay,
While his hale old wife, with busy care,
Was clearing the dinner away;

A sweet little girl, with fine blue eyes,
On her grandfather's knee was catching flies.

The old man laid his hand on her head,
With a tear on his wrinkled face,
He thought how often her mother, dead,
Had sat in the self-same place ;
As the tear stole down from his half-shut eye,
"Don't smoke!" said the child; "how it makes
you cry!"

The house-dog lay stretched out on the floor,
Where the shade after noon used to steal;
The busy old wife, by the open door,
Was turning the spinning-wheel;
And the old brass clock on the mantletree
Had plodded along to almost three.—

Still the farmer sat in his easy chair,
While close to his heaving breast
The moistened brow and the cheek so fair
Of his sweet grandchild were pressed;
His head, bent down, on her soft hair lay—
Fast asleep were they both, that summer day!

Charles G. Eastman.

ON THE SHORES OF TENNESSEE.

"Move my arm-chair, faithful Pompey,
In the sunshine bright and strong,
For this world is fading, Pompey,—
Massa won't be with you long ;

And I fain would hear the south wind
Bring once more the sound to me
Of the wavelets softly breaking
On the shores of Tennessee.

"Mournful, though, the ripples murmur,
As they still the story tell
How no vessels float the banner
That I've loved so long and well.
I shall listen to their music,
Dreaming that again I see
Stars and Stripes on sloop and shallop
Sailing up the Tennessee.

"And, Pompey, while old Massa's waiting
For death's last dispatch to come,
If that exiled, starry banner
Should come proudly sailing home,
You shall greet it, slave no longer!
Voice and hand shall both be free
That shout and point to Union colors
On the waves of Tennessec."

"Massa's berry kind to Pompey;
But ole darkey's happy here,
Where he's tended cōrn and cotton
For 'ese many a long gone year.
Over yonder Missis' sleeping—
No one tends her grave like me;
Mebbie she would miss the flowers
She used to love in Tennessee.

"'Pears like she was watching, Massa,
If Pompey should beside him stay;

Mebbie she'd remember better
How for him she used to pray ;
Telling him that way up yonder
White as snow his soul would be,
If he served the Lord of Heaven,
While he lived in Tennessee."

Silently the tears were rolling
Down the poor old dusky face,
As he stepped behind his master,
In his long-accustomed place.
Then a silence fell around them,
As they gazed on rock and tree
Pictured in the placid waters
Of the rolling Tennessee.

Master, dreaming of the battle
Where he fought by Marion's side,
When he bid the haughty Tarleton
Stoop his lordly crest of pride.
Man, remembering how yon sleeper
Once he held upon his knee,
Ere she loved the gallant soldier,
Ralph Vervair of Tennessee.

Still the south wind fondly lingers
'Mid the veteran's silver hair ;
Still the bondman, close beside him.
Stands behind the old arm-chair.
With his dark-hued hand uplifted,
Shading eyes, he bends to see
Where the woodland, boldly jutting,
Turns aside the Tennessee.

Thus he watches cloud-born shadows
Glide from tree to mountain crest,
Softly creeping, aye and ever
To the river's yielding breast.
Ha! above the foliage yonder
Something flutters wild and free!
"Massa! Massa! Hallelujah!
The flag's come back to Tennessee!"
"Pompey, hold me on your shoulder,
Help me stand on foot once more,
That I may salute the colors
As they pass my cabin door;
Here's the paper signed that frees you,
Give a freeman's shout with me—
'God and Union!' be our watchword
Evermore in Tennessee."

Then the trembling voice grew fainter,
And the limbs refused to stand;
One prayer to Jesus—and the soldier
Glided to that better land.
When the flag went down the river,
Man and master both were free,
While the ringdove's note was mingled
With the rippling Tennessee.

Ethel Lynn Deers.

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS.

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of the
year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown
and sere.

Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves
lie dead;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's
tread.
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs
the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the
gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers that lately
sprang and stood
In brighter light, and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves; the gentle race of
flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of
ours.
The rain is falling where they lie; but the cold Novem-
ber rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones
again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer
glow;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the
wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook, in autumn
beauty stood—
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the
plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone, from upland,
glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm, mild day, as still such
days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter
home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all
the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The South Wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance
late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream
no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty
died,
The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by my
side.
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forests
cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so
brief;
Yet not unmeet it was that one like that young friend of
ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

Wm. Cullen Bryant.

SNOW—A WINTER SKETCH.

THE blessed morn has come again;
The early gray,
Taps at the slumberer's window-pane,
And seems to say,
Break, break from the enchanter's chain,
Away, away!

'Tis winter, yet there is no sound
 Along the air
Of winds upon their battle-ground;
 But gently there
The snow is falling—all around
 How fair—how fair!

The jocund fields would masquerade;
 Fantastic scene!
Tree, shrub, and lawn, and lonely glade
 Have cast their green,
And joined the revel, all arrayed
 So white and clean.

E'en the old posts, that hold the bars
 And the old gate,
Forgetful of their wintry wars,
 And age sedate,
High capped, and plumed, like white hussars,
 Stand there in state.

The drifts are hanging by the sill,
 The eaves, the door;
The hay-stack has become a hill;
 All covered o'er
The wagon, loaded for the mill
 The eve before.

Maria brings the water-pail,
 But where's the well?
Like magic of a fairy tale,
 Most strange to tell,
All vanished, curb, and crank, and rail!
 How deep it fell!



The wood-pile, too, is playing hide;
The axe, the log,
The kennel of that friend so tried
(The old watch-dog),
The grindstone standing by its side,
Are now *incog*.

The bustling cock looks out aghast
From his high shed;
No spot to scratch him a repast—
Up curves his head,
Starts the dull hamlet with a blast,
And back to bed.

Old drowsy Dobbin, at the call
Amazed, awakes;
Out from the window of his stall
A view he takes,
While thick and faster seem to fall
The silent flakes.

The barnyard gentry, musing, chime
Their morning moan;
Like Memnon's music of old time,
That voice of stone!
So warbled they—and so sublime
Their solemn tone.

Good Ruth has called the younker folk
To dress below;
Full welcome was the word she spoke,
Down, down they go;
The cottage quietude is broke—
"The snow!" "The snow!"

Now rises from around the fire
 A pleasant strain ;
Ye giddy sons of mirth, retire !
 And ye profane !
A hymn to the Eternal Sire
 Goes up again.

The patriarchal Book divine,
 Upon the knee,
Opes where the gems of Judah shine,
 (Sweet minstrelsie !)
How soars each heart with each fair line,
 O, God, to thee !

Around the altar low they bend
 Devout in prayer ;
As snows upon the roof descend,
 So angels there
Come down that household to defend
 With gentle care.

Now sings the kettle o'er the blaze ;
 The buckwheat heaps ;
Rare Mocha, worth an Arab's praise,
 Sweet Susan steeps ;
The old round stand her nod obeys
 And out it leaps.

Unerring presages declare
 The banquet near ;
Soon busy appetites are there ;
 And disappear
The glories of the ample fare,
 With thanks sincere.

Now tiny snow-birds venture nigh
From copse and spray
(Sweet strangers ! with the winter's sky
To pass away),
And gather crumbs in full supply
For all the day.

Let now the busy hours begin :
Out rolls the churn ;
Forth hastes the farm-boy, and brings in
The brush to burn ;
Sweep, shovel, scour, sew, knit, and spin,
Till night's return.

To delve his threshing John must hie ;
His sturdy shoe
Can all the subtle damp defy ;
How wades he through !
While dainty milk-maids, slow and shy,
His track pursue.

Each to the hour's allotted care :
To shell the corn ;
The broken harness to repair ;
The sleigh t' adorn ;
As cheerful, tranquil, frosty, fair,
Speeds in the morn.

While mounts the eddying smoke amain
From many a hearth,
And all the landscape rings again
With rustic mirth—
So gladsome seems to every swain
The sunny earth.

Ralph Hoyt.

WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

I.

THE night is dark, and the winter winds
Go stabbing about with their icy spears ;
The sharp hail rattles against the panes,
And melts on my cheeks like tears !

'Tis a terrible night to be out of doors,
But some of us must be, early and late :
We needn't ask who, for don't we know
It has all been settled by Fate ?

Not woman, but man. Give woman her flowers,
Her dresses, her jewels, or what she demands :
The work of the world must be done by man,
Or why has he brawny hands ?

As I feel my way in the dark and cold,
I think of the chambers warm and bright—
The nests where these delicate birds of ours
Are folding their wings to-night !

Through the luminous windows, above and below,
I catch a glimpse of the life they lead :
Some sew, some sing, others dress for the ball,
While others (fair students) read.

There's the little lady who bears my name—
She sits at my table now, pouring her tea ;
Does she think of me as I hurry home,
Hungry and wet ? Not she. .

She helps herself to the sugar and cream,
In a thoughtless, dreamy, nonchalant way ;
Her hands are white as the virgin rose
That she wore on her wedding day !

My stubbed fingers are stained with ink—
The badge of the Ledger, the mark of Trade ;
But the money I give her is clean enough,
In spite of the way it is made !

I wear out my life in the counting-room
Over day-book and cash-book, Bought and Sold :
My brain is dizzy with anxious thought,
My skin is as sallow as gold !

How does she keep the roses of youth
Still fresh in her cheeks ? My roses are flown :
It lies in a nutshell—why do I ask ?
A woman's life is her own !

She gives me a kiss when we part for the day,
Then goes to her music, blithe as a bird ;
She reads it at sight, and the language too,
Though I know never a word !

She sews—a little ; makes collars and sleeves ;
Or embroiders me slippers (always too small) ;
Nets silken purses (for me to fill)—
Often does nothing at all

But dream in her chamber, holding a flower,
Or reading my letters (she'd better read me) !
Even now, while I am freezing with cold,
She is cozily sipping her tea !

If I ever reach home I shall laugh aloud
At the sight of a roaring fire once more :
She must wait, I think, till I thaw myself,
For the usual kiss at the door.

I'll have with my dinner a bottle of port,
To warm up my blood, and soothe my mind ;
Then a little music, for even I
Like music—when I have dined.

I'll smoke a pipe in the easy chair,
And feel her behind me patting my head ;
Or, drawing the little one on my knee,
Chat till the hour for bed !

II.

Will he never come ? I have watched for him
Till the misty panes are roughened with sleet ;
I can see no more : shall I never hear
The welcome sound of his feet ?

I think of him in the lonesome night,
Tramping along with a weary tread,
And wish he were here by the cheery fire,
Or I were there in his stead !

I sit by the grate, and hark for his step,
And stare in the fire with a troubled mind ;
The glow of the coals is bright in my face,
But my shadow is dark behind !

I think of woman, and think of man,
The tie that binds, and the wrongs that part,
And long to utter in burning words
What I feel to-night in my heart.

No weak complaint of the man I love,
No praise of myself, or my sisterhood;
But—something that women understand—
By men never understood!

Their natures jar in a thousand things;
Little matter, alas, who is right or wrong.
She goes to the wall! "*She is weak*," they say :
It is that that makes them strong!

But grant us weak (as in truth we are
In our love for them), they should make us strong;
But do they? Will they? "**WOMAN IS WEAK!**"
Is the burden still of their song!

Wherein am I weaker than Arthur, pray?
He has, as he should, a sturdier frame,
And he labors early and late for me,
But I—I could do the same!

My hands are willing, my brain is clear,
The world is wide, and the workers few;
But the work of the world belongs to man,
There is nothing for woman to do!

Yes, she has the holy duties of home,
A husband to love, and children to bear;
The softer virtues, the social arts—
In short, a life without care!

So our masters say. But what do they know
Of our lives, and feelings, when they are away?
Our household duties, our petty tasks,
The nothings that waste the day!

Nay, what do they care? 'Tis enough for them
That their homes are pleasant; they seek their ease:
One takes a wife to flatter his pride,
Another, to keep his keys!

They say they love us; perhaps they do,
In a masculine way, as they love their wine:
But the soul of a woman needs something more,
Or it suffers at times like mine!

Not that Arthur is ever unkind
In word or deed, for he loves me well;
But I fear he thinks me weak as the rest—
(And I may be, who can tell?)

I should die if he changed, or loved me less,
For I live at best but a restless life;
Yet he may, for they say the kindest men
Grow tired of a sickly wife!

Oh, love me, Arthur! my lord, my life,
If not for my love, and my womanly fears,
At least for your child. But I hear his step—
He must not find me in tears.

Richard Henry Stoddard.

THE WILD-WOOD HOME.

Oh, show me a place like the wild-wood home,
Where the air is fragrant and free,
And the first pure breathings of Morning come
In a gush of melody!

She lifts the soft fringe from her dark-blue eye
With a radiant smile of love,
And the diamonds that o'er her bosom lie
Are bright as the gems above ;

Where noon lies down in the breezy shade
Of the glorious forest bowers,
And the beautiful birds from the sunny glades
Sit nodding amongst the flowers,
While the holy child of the mountain-spring
Steals past with a murmured song,
And the honey-bees sleep in the bells that swing
Its garlanded banks along ;

Where Day steals away, with a young bride's blush,
To the soft green couch of Night,
And the Moon throws o'er, with a holy hush,
Her curtain of gossamer light ;
And the seraph that sings in the hemlock dell
(Oh, sweetest of birds is she !)
Fills the dewy breeze with a trancing swell
Of melody rich and free.

There are sumptuous mansions with marble walls,
Surmounted by glittering towers,
Where fountains play in the perfumed halls
Amongst exotic flowers :
They are suitable homes for the haughty in mind,
Yet a wild-wood home for me,
Where the pure bright streams, and the mountain-wind,
And the bounding heart, are free !

Lydia Jane Pierson.

AUCTION EXTRAORDINARY.

I DREAMED a dream in the midst of my slumbers,
And as fast as I dreamed it, it came into numbers;
My thoughts ran along in such beautiful metre,
I'm sure I ne'er saw any poetry sweeter:
It seemed that a law had been recently made,
That a tax on old bachelors' pates should be laid;
And in order to make them all willing to marry,
The tax was as large as a man could well carry.
The bachelors grumbled, and said 'twas no use—
'Twas horrid injustice and horrid abuse,
And declared that to save their own hearts' blood from
 spilling,
Of such a vile tax they would not pay a shilling.
But the rulers determined them still to pursue,
So they set all the old bachelors up at vendue:
A crier was sent through the town to and fro,
To rattle his bell, and his trumpet to blow,
And to call out to all he might meet in his way,
"Ho! forty old bachelors sold here to-day:"
And presently all the old maids in the town,
Each in her very best bonnet and gown,
From thirty to sixty, fair, plain, red, and pale,
Of every description, all flocked to the sale.
The auctioneer then in his labor began,
And called out aloud, as he held up a man,
"How much for a bachelor? who wants to buy?"
In a twink, every maiden responded, "I,—I."
In short, at a highly extravagant price,
The bachelors all were sold off in a trice:
And forty old maidens, some younger, some older,
Each lugged an old bachelor home on her shoulder.

THE QUAKER WIDOW.

THEE finds me in the garden, Hannah—come in! 'Tis
kind of thee

To wait until the Friends were gone, who came to com-
fort me.

The still and quiet company a peace may give, indeed,
But blessèd is the single heart that comes to us at need.

Come, sit thee down! Here is the bench where Ben-
jamin would sit

On First-day afternoons in spring, and watch the swa-
lows flit:

He loved to smell the sprouting box, and hear the pleas-
ant bees

Go humming round the lilacs and through the apple-
trees.

I think he loved the spring: not that he cared for
flowers: most men

Think such things foolishness—but we were first ac-
quainted then,

One spring: the next he spoke his mind; the third I
was his wife,

And in the spring (it happened so) our children entered
life.

He was but seventy-five: I did not think to lay him
yet

In Kennett graveyard, where at Monthly Meeting first
we met.

The Father's mercy shows in this : 'tis better I should be
Picked out to bear the heavy cross—alone in age—than
he.

We've lived together fifty years : it seems but one long
day,
One quiet Sabbath of the heart, till he was called away ;
And as we bring from Meeting-time a sweet contentment
home,
So, Hannah, I have store of peace for all the days to
come.

I mind (for I can tell thee now) how hard it was to know
If I had heard the spirit right, that told me I should go ;
For father had a deep concern upon his mind that day,
But mother spoke for Benjamin—she knew what best
to say.

Then she was still : they sat awhile : at last she spoke
again,
“The Lord incline thee to the right !” And “Thou
shalt have him, Jane !”
My father said. I cried. Indeed, 'twas not the least
of shocks,
For Benjamin was Hicksite, and father Orthodox.

I thought of this ten years ago, when daughter Ruth
we lost :
Her husband's of the world, and yet I could not see
her crossed.
She wears, thee knows, the gayest gowns, she hears a
hireling priest—
Ah, dear ! the cross was ours : her life's a happy one,
at least.

Perhaps she'll wear a plainer dress when she's as old
as I :

Would thee believe it, Hannah? once *I* felt temptation
nigh!

My wedding-gown was ashen silk, too simple for my
taste;

I wanted lace around the neck, and a ribbon at the waist.

How strange it seemed to sit with him upon the
women's side!

I did not dare to lift my eyes: I felt more fear than
pride,

Till, "In the presence of the Lord," he said, and then
there came

A holy strength upon my heart, and I could say the same.

I used to blush when he came near, but then I showed
no sign;

With all the meeting looking on, I held his hand in
mine.

It seemed my bashfulness was gone, now I was his
for life:

Thee knows the feeling, Hannah—thee, too, hast been
a wife.

As home we rode, I saw no fields look half so green as
ours;

The woods were coming into leaf, the meadows full of
flowers;

The neighbors met us in the lane, and every face was
kind—

'Tis strange how lively every thing comes back upon my
mind.

I see, as plain as thee sits there, the wedding dinner
spread ;
At our own table we were guests, with father at the
head,
And Dinah Passmore helped us both—'twas she stood
up with me,
And Abner Jones with Benjamin—and now they're
gone, all three !

It is not right to wish for death ; the Lord disposes
best.
His Spirit comes to quiet hearts, and fits them for His
rest ;
And that He halved our little flock was merciful, I see ;
For Benjamin has two in heaven, and two are left with
me.

Eusebius never cared to farm—'twas not his call, in
truth,
And I must rent the dear old place, and go to daughter
Ruth.
Thee'll say her ways are not like mine ; young people
now-a-days
Have fallen sadly off, I think, from all the good old ways.

But Ruth is still a Friend at heart ; she keeps the simple
tongue,
The cheerful, kindly nature we loved when she was
young ;
And it was brought upon my mind, remembering her, of
late,
That we on dress and outward things perhaps lay too
much weight.

I once heard Jesse Kersey say, a spirit clothed with
 grace,
And pure, almost, as angels are, may have a homely face.
And dress may be of less account: the Lord will look
 within ;
The soul it is that testifies of righteousness or sin.
Thee mustn't be too hard on Ruth: she's anxious I
 should go,
And she will do her duty as a daughter should, I know.
'Tis hard to change so late in life, but we must be re-
 signed ;
The Lord looks down contentedly upon a willing mind.

Bayard Taylor.

THE OLD OAKEN BUCKET.

How dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
 When fond recollection presents them to view !—
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wildwood,
 And every loved spot which my infancy knew !
The wide-spreading pond, and the mill that stood by it ;
 The bridge, and the rock where the cataract fell ;
The cot of my father, the dairy-house nigh it ;
 And e'en the rude bucket that hung in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket, which hung in the well.
That moss-covered vessel I hailed as a treasure ;
 For often at noon, when returned from the field,
I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure—
 The purest and sweetest that Nature can yield

How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing,
And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell!
Then soon, with the emblem of truth overflowing,
And dripping with coolness, it rose from the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket, arose from the well.

How sweet from the green, mossy brim to receive it,
As, poised on the curb, it inclined to my lips!
Not a full, blushing goblet could tempt me to leave it,
The brightest that beauty or revelry sips.
And now, far removed from the loved habitation,
The tear of regret will intrusively swell,
As Fancy reverts to my father's plantation,
And sighs for the bucket that hangs in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket, that hangs in the well!

Samuel Woodworth.

ANNABEL LEE.

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden lived, whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love, and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea;
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee—

With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her high-born kinsman came,
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me.
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know),
In this kingdom by the sea,
The wind came out of a cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.
And so, all the night-tide I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life, and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Edgar Allan Poe.

UP THE HILL A-BERRYING.

On a sunny summer morning,
Early as the dew was dry,
Up the hill I went a-berrying.
Need I tell you, tell you why?
Farmer Davis had a daughter,
And it happened that I knew,
On such sunny mornings, Jenny
Up the hill went berrying too.

Lonely work is picking berries;
So I joined her on the hill.
"Jenny, dear," said I, "your basket's
Quite too large for one to fill."
So we staid—we two—to fill it,
Jenny talking—I was still—
Leading where the way was steepest,
Picking berries up the hill.

"This is up-hill work," said Jenny:
"So is life," said I; "shall we
Climb it each alone, or, Jenny,
Will you come and climb with me?"
Redder than the blushing berries
Jenny's cheek a moment grew;
While, without delay, she answered,
"I will come and climb with you!"

Luella Clark

SIX LITTLE FEET ON THE FENDER.

IN my heart there liveth a picture,
Of a kitchen rude and old,
Where the firelight tripped o'er the rafters,
And reddened the roof's brown mould;
Gilding the steam from the kettle
That hummed on the foot-worn hearth,
Throughout all the livelong evening
Its measure of drowsy mirth.

Because of the three light shadows
That frescoed that rude old room—
Because of the voices echoed,
Up 'mid the rafters' gloom—
Because of the feet on the fender,
Six restless, white little feet—
The thoughts of that dear old kitchen
Are to me so fresh and sweet.

When the first dash on the window
Told of the coming rain,
Oh! where are the fair young faces
That crowded against the pane?
While bits of firelight stealing
Their dimpled cheeks between,
Went struggling out in the darkness,
In shreds of silver sheen.

Two of the feet grew weary
One dreary, dismal day,
And we tied them with snow-white ribbons,
Leaving him there by the way.

There was fresh clay on the fender
That weary, wint'ry night,
For the four little feet had tracked it
From his grave on the bright hill's height.
Oh! why, on this darksome evening,
This evening of rain and sleet,
Rest my feet all alone on the hearthstone?
Oh! where are those other feet?
Are they treading the pathway of virtue
That will bring us together above?
Or have they made steps that will dampen
A sister's tireless love?

Cornelia W. Laws.

MY MOTHER'S BIBLE.

THIS book is all that's left me now!
Tears will unbidden start—
With faltering lip and throbbing brow
I press it to my heart.
For many generations past,
Here is our family tree;
My mother's hands this Bible clasped—
She, dying, gave it me.
Ah! well do I remember those
Whose names these records bear,
Who round the hearthstone used to close
After the evening prayer,
And speak of what these pages said,
In tones my heart would thrill:
Though they are with the silent dead,
Here are they living still!

My father read this holy book
To brothers, sisters dear;
How calm was my poor mother's look,
Who leaned God's word to hear!
Her angel face—I see it yet;
What thronging memories come!
Again that little group is met
Within the halls of home!

Thou truest friend man ever knew,
Thy constancy I've tried;
Where all were false I found thee true,
My counsellor and guide.
The mines of earth no treasure give
That could this volume buy:
In teaching me the way to live,
It taught me how to die.

George P. Morris.

A HOME PICTURE.

BEN FISHER had finished his hard day's work,
And he sat at his cottage door;
His good wife, Kate, sat by his side,
And the moonlight danced on the floor:
The moonlight danced on the cottage floor,
Her beams were as clear and bright
As when he and Kate, twelve years before,
Talked love in the mellow light.
Ben Fisher had never a pipe of clay,
And never a dram drank he;
So he loved at home with his wife to stay,
And they chatted right merrily:

Right merrily chatted they on, the while
Her babe slept on her breast ;
While a chubby rogue, with rosy smile,
On his father's knee found rest.

Ben told her how fast his potatoes grew,
And the corn in the lower field ;
And the wheat on the hill was grown to seed,
And promised a glorious yield :
A glorious yield in the harvest time,
And his orchard was doing fair ;
His sheep and his stock were in the prime,
His farm all in good repair.

Kate said that her garden looked beautiful,
Her fowls and her calves were fat ;
That the butter that Tommy that morning churned,
Would buy him a Sunday hat ;
That Jenny for pa' a new shirt had made,
And 'twas done, too, by the rule ;
That Neddy the garden could nicely spade,
And Ann was ahead at school.

Ben slowly passed his toil-worn hand
Through his locks of grayish brown—
“I tell you, Kate, what I think,” said he,
“We're the happiest folks in town.”
“I know,” said Kate, “that we all work hard—
Work and health go together, I've found ;
For there's Mrs. Bell does not work at all,
And she's sick the whole year round.
“They're worth their thousands, so people say,
But I ne'er saw them happy yet ;

'Twould not be me that would take their gold
And live in a constant fret.
My humble home has a light within
Mrs. Bell's gold could not buy,
Six healthy children, a merry heart,
And a husband's love-lit eye."

I fancied a tear was in Ben's eye—
The moon shone brighter and clearer—
I could not tell why the man should cry,
But he hitched up to Kate still nearer ;
He leaned his head on her shoulder there,
And took her hand in his—
I guess (though I looked at the moon just then)
That he left on her lips a kiss.

Frances D. Gage.

THE STRANGER ON THE SILL.

BETWEEN broad fields of wheat and corn
Is the lowly home where I was born ;
The peach-tree leans against the wall,
And the woodbine wanders over all ;
There is the shaded doorway still,
But a stranger's foot has crossed the sill.

There is the barn—and, as of yore,
I can smell the hay from the open door,
And see the busy swallows throng,
And hear the pewee's mournful song ;
But the stranger comes—oh ! painful proof—
His sheaves are piled to the heated roof.

There is the orchard—the very trees
Where my childhood knew long hours of ease,
And watched the shadowy moments run
Till my life imbibed more shade than sun;
The swing from the bough still sweeps the air,
But the stranger's children are swinging there.

There bubbles the shady spring below,
With its bulrush brook where the hazels grow;
'Twas there I found the calamus-root,
And watched the minnows poise and shoot,
And heard the robin lave its wing—
But the stranger's bucket is at the spring.

O ye, who daily cross the sill,
Step lightly, for I love it still;
And when you crowd the old barn-eaves,
Then think what countless harvest-sheaves
Have passed within that scented door
To gladden eyes that are no more!

Deal kindly with these orchard-trees;
And when your children crowd their knees
Their sweetest fruit they shall impart,
As if old memories stirred their heart:
To youthful sport still leave the swing,
And in sweet reverence hold the spring.

The barn, the trees, the brook, the birds,
The meadows with their lowing herds,
The woodbine on the cottage wall—
My heart still lingers with them all.
Ye strangers on my native sill,
Step lightly, for I love it still!

Thomas Buchanan Read.

HANNAH BINDING SHOES.

Poor lone Hannah,
Sitting at the window, binding shoes!
Faded, wrinkled,
Sitting, stitching, in a mournful muse!
Bright-eyed beauty once was she,
When the bloom was on the tree.
Spring and Winter
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Not a neighbor
Passing nod or answer will refuse
To her whisper :
"Is there from the fishers any news?"
Oh, her heart's adrift with one
On an endless voyage gone!
Night and morning
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Fair young Hannah,
Ben, the sun-burnt fisher, gayly woos ;
Hale and clever,
For a willing heart and hand he sues.
May-day skies are all aglow,
And the waves are laughing so
For her wedding,
Hannah leaves her window and her shoes.

May is passing ;
'Mid the apple-boughs a pigeon coos.
Hannah shudders,

For the wild southwester mischief brews ;
 Round the rocks of Marblehead,
 Outward bound a schooner sped.
 Silent, lonesome,
 Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

'Tis November !
 Now no tear her wasted cheek bedews ;
 From Newfoundland
 Not a sail returning will she lose ;
 Whispering, hoarsely, " Fishermen,
 Have you, have you heard of Ben ?"
 Old with watching,
 Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Twenty Winters
 Bleach and tear the ragged shore she views.
 Twenty seasons ;
 Never one has brought her any news.
 Still her dim eyes, silently,
 Chase the white sail o'er the sea.
 Hopeless, faithful,
 Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Lucy Larcom.

THE VAGABONDS.

WE are two travellers, Roger and I,
 Roger's my dog.—Come here, you scamp !
 Jump for the gentlemen—mind your eye !
 Over the table—look out for the lamp !—

The rogue is growing a little old :

Five years we've tramped through wind and weather,
And slept out-doors when nights were cold,
And ate and drank—and starved—together.

We've learned what comfort is, I tell you !

A bed on the floor, a bit of rosin,
A fire to thaw our thumbs (poor fellow !
The paw he holds up there's been frozen),
Plenty of catgut for my fiddle
(This out-door business is bad for strings),
Then a few nice buckwheats hot from the griddle,
And Roger and I set up for kings !

No, thank ye, sir—I never drink ;

Roger and I are exceedingly moral—
Aren't we, Roger !—See him wink !—

Well, something hot, then—we won't quarrel.
He's thirsty, too—see him nod his head ?

What a pity, sir, that dogs can't talk !
He understands every word that's said—
And he knows good milk from water-and-chalk.

The truth is, sir, now I reflect,

I've been so sadly given to grog,
I wonder I've not lost the respect
(Here's to you, sir !). even of my dog.
But he sticks by, through thick and thin ;
And this old coat, with its empty pockets,
And rags that smell of tobacco and gin,
He'll follow while he has eyes in his sockets.

There isn't another creature living

Would do it, and prove, through every disaster,

So fond, so faithful, and so forgiving,
To such a miserable, thankless master !
No, sir !—see him wag his tail, and grin !
By GEORGE ! it makes my old eyes water !
That is, there's something in this gin
That chokes a fellow. But no matter.

We'll have some music, if you're willing,
And Roger here (what a plague a cough is, sir !)
Shall march a little.—Start, you villain !
Paws up ! Eyes front ! Salute your officer !
'Boutface ! Attention ! Take your rifle !
(Some dogs have arms, you see !) Now hold your
Cap while the gentlemen give a trifle,
To aid a poor old patriot soldier !

March ! Halt ! Now show how the rebel shakes,
When he stands up to hear his sentence.
Now tell us how many drams it takes
To honor a jolly new acquaintance.
Five yelps—that's five ; he's mighty knowing !
The night's before us, fill the glasses !—
Quick, sir ! I'm ill—my brain is going !—
Some brandy—thank you—there !—it passes !

Why not reform ? That's easily said ;
But I've gone through such wretched treatment,
Sometimes forgetting the taste of bread,
And scarce remembering what meat meant,
That my poor stomach's past reform ;
And there are times when, mad with thinking,
I'd sell out heaven for something warm
To prop a horrible inward sinking.

Is there a way to forget to think ?

At your age, sir, home, fortune, friends,
A dear girl's love—but I took to drink ;—

The same old story ; you know how it ends.

If you could have seen these classic features—

You needn't laugh, sir ; they were not then
Such a burning libel on God's creatures :

I was one of your handsome men !

If you had seen HER, so fair and young,

Whose head was happy on this breast !

If you could have heard the songs I sung

When the wine went round, you wouldn't have guessed,

That ever I, sir, should be straying

From door to door, with fiddle and dog,

Ragged and penniless, and playing

To you to-night for a glass of grog !

She's married since—a parson's wife :

'Twas better for her that we should part—

Better the soberest, prosiest life

Than a blasted home and a broken heart.

I have seen her ! Once : I was weak and spent

On the dusty road : a carriage stopped :

But little she dreamed, as on she went,

Who kissed the coin that her fingers dropped !

You've set me talking, sir ; I'm sorry :

It makes me wild to think of the change !

What do you care for a beggar's story ?

Is it amusing ? you find it strange !

I had a mother so proud of me !

'Twas well she died before—— Do you know

If the happy spirits in heaven can see
The ruin and wretchedness here below ?

Another glass, and strong, to deaden
This pain ; then Roger and I will start.
I wonder, has he such a lumpish, leaden,
Aching thing, in place of a heart ?
He is sad sometimes, and would weep, if he could,
No doubt, remembering things that were—
A virtuous kennel, with plenty of food,
And himself a sober, respectable cur.

I'm better now ; that glass was warming.—
You rascal ! limber your lazy feet !
We must be fiddling and performing
For supper and bed, or starve in the street.—
Not a very gay life to lead, you think ?
But soon we shall go where lodgings are free,
And the sleepers need neither victuals nor drink ;—
The sooner, the better for Roger and me.

J. T. Thowbridge.

A BALLAD OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

"The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around."—COLERIDGE.

"Oh, whither sail you, Sir John Franklin ?"
Cried a whaler in Baffin's Bay.
"To know if between the land and the pole
I may find a broad sea-way."

"I charge you back, Sir John Franklin,
As you would live and thrive ;
For between the land and the frozen pole
No man may sail alive."

But lightly laughed the stout Sir John,
And spoke unto his men :

"Half England is wrong if he is right ;
Bear off to westward then."

"Oh, whither sail you, brave Englishman ?"
Cried the little Esquimaux.

"Between your land and the polar star
My goodly vessels go."

"Come down, if you would journey there,"
The little Indian said,

"And change your cloth for fur clothing,
Your vessel for a sled."

But lightly laughed the stout Sir John,
And the crew laughed with him too :

"A sailor to change from ship to sled,
I ween, were something new !"

All through the long, long polar day,
The vessels westward sped ;
And wherever the sail of Sir John was blown,
The ice gave way and fled—

Gave way with many a hollow groan,
And with many a surly roar,
But it murmured and threatened on every side
And closed where he sailed before.

"Ho ! see ye not, my merry men,
The broad and open sea !
Bethink ye what the whaler said,
Think of the little Indian's sled !"
The crew laughed out in glee.

"Sir John, Sir John, 'tis bitter cold,
The scud drives on the breeze,
The ice comes looming from the north,
The very sunbeams freeze."

"Bright summer goes, dark winter comes—
We cannot rule the year ;
But long ere summer's sun goes down,
On yonder sea we'll steer."

The dripping icebergs dipped and rose,
And floundered down the gale ;
The ships were stayed, the yards were manned,
And furled the useless sail.

"The summer's gone, the winter's come,
We sail not on yonder sea :
Why sail we not, Sir John Franklin ?"
A silent man was he.

"The summer goes, the winter comes—
We cannot rule the year :
I ween, we cannot rule the ways,
Sir John, wherein we'd steer."

The cruel ice came floating on,
And closed beneath the lee,
Till the thickening waters dashed no more ;
'Twas ice around, behind, before—
My God ! there is no sea !

"What think you of the whaler now?

What of the Esquimaux?

A sled were better than a ship,
To cruise through ice and snow."

Down sank the baleful crimson sun,
The Northern Light came out,
And glared upon the ice-bound ships,
And shook its spears about.

The snow came down, storm breeding storm,
And on the decks was laid:
Till the weary sailor, sick at heart,
Sank down beside his spade.

"Sir John, the night is black and long,
The hissing wind is bleak,
The hard, green ice is strong as death:—
I prithee, Captain, speak!"

"The night is neither bright nor short,
The singing breeze is cold,
The ice is not so strong as hope—
The heart of man is bold!"

"What hope can scale this icy wall,
High o'er the main flag-staff?
Above the ridges the wolf and bear
Look down with a patient, settled stare,
Look down on us and laugh."

The summer went, the winter came—
We could not rule the year;
But summer will melt the ice again,
And open a path to the sunny main,
Whereon our ships shall steer.

The winter went, the summer went,
The winter came around :
But the hard, green ice was strong as death,
And the voice of Hope sank to a breath,
Yet caught at every sound.

"Hark ! heard ye not the noise of guns ?
And there, and there, again ?"
" 'Tis some uneasy iceberg's roar,
As he turns in the frozen main."

"Hurrah ! hurrah ! the Esquimaux
Across the ice-fields steal."
"God give them grace for their charity !
Ye pray for the silly seal."

"Sir John, where are the English fields,
And where are the English trees,
And where are the little English flowers
That open in the breeze ?"

"Be still, be still, my brave sailors !
You shall see the fields again,
And smell the scent of the opening flowers,
The grass and the waving grain."

"Oh, when shall I see my orphan child ?
My Mary waits for me."

"Oh, when shall I see my old mother,
And pray at her trembling knee ?"

"Be still, be still, my brave sailors !
Think not such thoughts again."
But a tear froze slowly on his cheek—
He thought of Lady Jane.

Ah! bitter, bitter grows the cold,
The ice grows more and more;
More settled stare the wolf and bear,
More patient than before.

"Oh, think you, good Sir John Franklin,
We'll ever see the land?
'Twas cruel to send us here to starve,
Without a helping hand.

"'Twas cruel, Sir John, to send us here,
So far from help or home,
To starve and freeze on this lonely sea:
I ween, the Lords of the Admiralty
Would rather send than come."

"Oh, whether we starve to death alone,
Or sail to our own country,
We have done what man has never done—
The truth is founded, the secret won—
We passed the Northern Sea!"

George H. Boker.

THE BALLAD OF BABIE BELL.

I.

HAVE you not heard the poets tell
How came the dainty Babie Bell
Into this world of ours?
The gates of heaven were left ajar:
With folded hands and dreamy eyes,
Wandering out of Paradise,
She saw this planet, like a star,

Hung in the glittering depths of even—
Its bridges, running to and fro,
O'er which the white-winged Angels go,
 Bearing the holy dead to heaven !
She touched a bridge of flowers—those feet,
 So light they did not bend the bells
 Of the celestial asphodels !
They fell like dew upon the flowers,
Then all the air grew strangely sweet !
And thus came dainty Babie Bell
 Into this world of ours.

II.

She came and brought delicious May.
 The swallows built beneath the eaves :
 Like sunlight in and out the leaves,
The robins went, the livelong day ;
The lily swung its noiseless bell,
 And o'er the porch the trembling vine
 Seemed bursting with its veins of wine :
How sweetly, softly, twilight fell !
Oh, earth was full of singing-birds,
 And opening spring-tide flowers,
When the dainty Babie Bell
 Came to this world of ours !

III.

O Babie, dainty Babie Bell,
How fair she grew from day to day !
 What woman-nature filled her eyes,
 What poetry within them lay !
Those deep and tender twilight eyes,

So full of meaning, pure and bright
As if she yet stood in the light
Of those oped gates of Paradise!
And so we loved her more and more :
Ah, never in our hearts before
Was love so lovely born :
We felt we had a link between
This real world and that unseen—
The land beyond the morn !
And for the love of those dear eyes,
For love of her whom God led forth
(The mother's being ceased on earth
When Babie came from Paradise)—
For love of Him who smote our lives,
And woke the chords of joy and pain,
We said, "Dear Christ!"—our hearts bent down
Like violets after rain.

IV.

And now the orchards, which were white
And red with blossoms when she came,
Were rich in autumn's mellow prime :
The clustered apples burnt like flame,
The soft-cheeked peaches blushed and fell,
The ivory chestnut burst its shell,
The grapes hung purpling in the grange :
And time wrought just as rich a change
In little Babie Bell.
Her lissome form more perfect grew,
And in her features we could trace,
In softened curves, her mother's face !
Her angel-nature ripened too.

We thought her lovely when she came,
But she was holy, saintly now
Around her pale angelic brow
We saw a slender ring of flame!

V.

God's hand had taken away the seal
That held the portals of her speech;
And oft she said a few strange words
Whose meaning lay beyond our reach.
She never was a child to us,
We never held her being's key:
We could not teach her holy things—
She was Christ's self in purity.

VI.

It came upon us by degrees:
We saw its shadow ere it fell,
The knowledge that our God had sent
His messenger for Babie Bell.
We shuddered with unlanguage'd pain,
And all our hopes were changed to fears,
And all our thoughts ran into tears
Like sunshine into rain.
We cried aloud in our belief,
"Oh, smite us gently, gently, God!
Teach us to bend and kiss the rod,
And perfect grow through grief."
Ah, how we loved her, God can tell;
Her heart was folded deep in ours;
Our hearts are broken, Babie Bell!

VII.

At last he came, the messenger,
The messenger from unseen lands :
And what did dainty Babie Bell ?
She only crossed her little hands,
She only looked more meek and fair !
We parted back her silken hair :
We wove the roses round her brow,
White buds, the summer's drifted snow—
Wrapped her from head to foot in flowers,
And thus went dainty Babie Bell
Out of this world of ours !

Thomas Bailey Alarich.

THE LITTLE STEP-SON.

I HAVE a little step-son, the loveliest thing alive ;
A noble, sturdy boy is he, and yet he's only five ;
His smooth cheek hath a blooming glow, his eyes are
black as jet,
And his lips are like two rose-buds, all tremulous and
wet ;
His days pass off in sunshine, in laughter, and in song
As careless as a summer rill, that sings itself along ;
For like a pretty fairy tale, that's all too quickly told,
Is the young life of a little one, that's only five years old.
He's dreaming on his happy couch before the day grows
dark,
He's up with morning's rosy ray, a-singing with the
lark ;

Where'er the flowers are freshest, where'er the grass is
green,
With light locks waving on the wind, his fairy form is
seen,
Amid the whistling March winds, amid the April show-
ers,
He warbles with the singing-birds, and blossoms with
the flowers.
He cares not for the summer heat, he cares not for the
cold,
My sturdy little step-son, that's only five years old.
How touching 'tis to see him clasp his dimpled hands in
prayer,
And raise his little rosy face with reverential air!
How simple in his eloquence! how soft his accents fall,
When pleading with the King of kings, to love and bless
us all!
And when from prayer he bounds away in innocence and
joy,
The blessing of a smiling God goes with the sinless boy;
A little lambkin of the flock, within the Saviour's fold,
Is he, my lovely step-son, that's only five years old.
I have not told you of our home, that in the summer
hours,
Stands in its simple modesty, half hid among the flowers;
I have not said a single word about our mines of wealth—
Our treasures are this little boy, contentment, peace, and
health.
For even a lordly hall to us would be a voiceless place,
Without the gush of his glad voice, the gleams of his
bright face.

And many a courtly pair, I ween, would give their gems
and gold
For a noble, happy boy like ours, some four or five years
old.

Amelia B. Welby.

THE COLONEL'S SHIELD.

Your picture, slung about my neck,
The day we went a-field,
Swung out before the trench;
It caught the eye of rank and file,
Who said, "The Colonel's Shield."

I thrust it back, and with my men
(Our General rode ahead)
We stormed the great redoubt,
As if it were an easy thing,
But rows of us fell dead!

Your picture hanging on my neck,
Up with my men I rushed;
We made an awful charge:
And then my horse, "The Lady Bess,"
Dropped, and—my leg was crushed!

The blood of battle in my veins
(A blue-coat dragged me out)—
But I remembered you;
I kissed your picture—did you know?
And yelled, "For the redoubt!"

The Twenty-Fourth, my scarred old dogs,
Growled back, "He'll put us through ;
We'll take him in our arms :
Our picture there—the girl he loves,
Shall see what we can do."

The foe was silenced—so were we.
I lay upon the field,
Among the Twenty-Fourth ;
Your picture, shattered on my breast,
Had proved "The Colonel's Shield."
Mrs. R. H. Stoddard.

A SONG FOR THE FARMER.

A song I sing, an humble song
For the farmer's honest calling ;
Whose sinews strong toil all day long
In ploughing, threshing, mauling—
Whose manly step and upright form
We recognize on meeting—
Whose hardened hand we haste to grasp
In friendship's cordial greeting.

No tinsel trapping decks the hand
So honestly extended ;
Nor yet by kid or silken glove
Is it from winds defended.
Bronzed, and hard, and rough with toil,
The breezes pass unheeded,
Or warded off by housewife's thrift
With mittens warm when needed.

No broadcloth fine from foreign land
Was for his coat imported;
No silk or satin for his vest
By skilful hands assorted.
That coat and vest in cruder form
His own sheep wore while grazing,
And even his shirt so white was wrought
From flax of his own raising.

Dependent upon God alone,
His bread, or corn or wheaten,
Is garnered from his fertile field,
And thankfully is eaten;
The family gathered 'round his board
With reverence look to Heaven,
And bless the God by whom alone
Their competence is given.

Ho! 'tis the spring—the sunny spring!
The grass is faintly peeping
Above the earth where it so long
In icy bonds was sleeping:
The birds are singing in the brake,
The cattle loud are lowing,
The peacock struts with prouder step,
And chanticleer is crowing.

Off to his field the farmer hies
To plough the lengthened furrow—
To rouse the ground-mole from his sleep,
The rabbit from his burrow—
To turn once more the mellow mould,
Or rend the sod long growing,

Or with the harrow harsh prepare
His field for time of sowing.

Anon there come the fervid days,
When—like a clear lake laving
Its emerald shore with billowy spray—
The golden fields are waving.
Then does the farmer with the dawn
Arouse the laggard sleepers,
And hieing merrily away
He leads the band of reapers.

Lo! autumn comes! the misty days,
So balmy, so delicious—
No sun “intolerably shines,”
No wint’ry winds capricious—
The golden apple ripely hangs
On orchard bough well laden,
And for the purple, clustering grape
Go forth the swain and maiden.

And while they seek the luscious fruit,
They plan the future party—
The ever-merry husking night,
Of pleasure free and hearty;
Or for the idle who prefer
A sport less mixed with toiling,
They choose some bright October night
For apple-butter boiling.

The mind must have its pleasures too,
And by the log fire burning
Are old and young with useful books,
The storied pages turning—

Beguiled are those from ills of age—
While these are well preparing
For future life—its joys and ills,
Its woes or honors bearing.

Thus is the farmer's house the home
Of innocent enjoyment—

Thus pass his moments when relieved
From out-of-door employment:
Oh, ever thus may be his lot
Of labor mixed with pleasure,
Until his three-score years and ten
Fill to the brim life's measure.

William Hubbard.

THE LITTLE DRUMMER.

'Tis of a little drummer
The story I shall tell,
Of how he marched to battle,
And all that there befell;
Out in the West with Lyon
(For once that name was true),
For whom the little drummer beat
His *rat-tat-too*.

Our army rose at midnight,
Ten thousand men as one,
Each slinging on his knapsack
And snatching up his gun:
"Forward!" and off they started,
As all good soldiers do,

When the little drummer beats for them
The *rat-tat-too*.

Across a rolling country,
Where the mist began to rise ;
Past many a blackened farm-house,
Till the sun was in the skies ;
Then we met the rebel pickets,
Who skirmished and withdrew,
While the little drummer beat and beat
The *rat-tat-too*.

Along the wooded hollows
The line of battle ran.
Our centre poured a volley,
And the fight at once began—
For the rebels answered, shouting,
And a shower of bullets flew ;
But still the little drummer beat
His *rat-tat-too*.

He stood among his comrades,
As they quickly formed the line,
And when they raised their muskets
He watched the barrels shine !
And when the volley broke, he started,
For war to him was new ;
But still the little drummer beat
His *rat-tat-too*.

It was a sight to see them,
That early autumn day—
Our soldiers in their blue coats,
And the rebel ranks in gray ;

The smoke that rolled between them,
The balls that whistled through,
And the little drummer as he beat
His *rat-tat-too*.

His comrades dropped around him—
By fives and tens they fell,
Some pierced by Minié bullets,
Some torn by shot and shell.
They played against our cannon,
And a caisson's splinters flew ;
But still the little drummer beat
His *rat-tat-too*.

The right, the left, the centre—
The fight was everywhere ;
They pushed us here—we wavered—
We drove and broke them there.
The gray-backs fixed their bayonets
And charged the coats of blue—
But still the little drummer beat
His *rat-tat-too*.

“Where is our little drummer?”
His nearest comrades say,
When the dreadful fight is over
And the smoke is cleared away.
As the rebel corps was scattering
He urged them to pursue—
So furiously he beat and beat
The *rat-tat-too*.

He stood no more among them ;
A bullet, as it sped,

Had glanced and struck his ankle,
And stretched him with the dead !
He crawled behind a cannon,
And pale and paler grew ;
But still the little drummer beat
His *rat-tat-too*.

They bore him to the surgeon,
A busy man was he ;
“ A drummer-boy—what ails him ? ”
His comrades answered, “ See ! ”
As they took him from the stretcher
A heavy breath he drew,
And his little fingers strove to beat
The *rat-tat-too*.

The ball had spent its fury :
“ A scratch,” the surgeon said,
As he wound the snowy bandage
Which the lint was staining red !
“ I must leave you now, old fellow ! ”
“ Oh, take me back with you,
For I know the men are missing me,
And the *rat-tat-too* ! ”

Upon his comrade's shoulder
They lifted him so grand,
With his dusty drum before him
And his drum-sticks in his hand !
To the fiery front of battle,
That nearer, nearer drew—
And evermore he beat and beat
His *rat-tat-too*.



The wounded, as he passed them,
Looked up and gave a cheer ;
And one in dying blessed him,
Between a smile and tear !
And the gray-backs—they are flying
Before the coats of blue,
For whom the little drummer beats
His *rat-tat-too*.

When the west was red with sunset
The last pursuit was o'er ;
Brave Lyon rode the foremost,
And looked the name he bore !
And before him, on his saddle,
As a weary child would do,
Sat the little drummer fast asleep,
With his *rat-tat-too*.

R. H. Stoddard.

THE MOTHERS OF THE WEST.

THE mothers of our forest-land !
Stout-hearted dames were they !
With nerve to wield the battle-brand,
And join the border fray.
Our rough land had no braver,
In its days of blood and strife—
Aye ready for severest toil,
Aye free to peril life.

The mothers of our forest-land !
On old Kentucky's soil

How shared they, with each dauntless band,
War's tempest and life's toil !
They shrank not from the foe-man—
They quailed not in the fight—
But cheered their husbands through the day,
And soothed them through the night.

The mothers of our forest-land !
Their bosoms pillowed men !
And proud were they by such to stand,
In hammock, fort, or glen,
To load the sure old rifle—
To run the leaden ball—
To watch a battling husband's place,
And fill it, should he fall !

The mother's of our forest-land !
Such were their daily deeds :
Their monument !—where does it stand ?
Their epitaph !—who reads ?
No braver dames had Sparta,
No nobler matrons Rome—
Yet who or lauds or honors them,
E'en in their own green home ?

The mothers of our forest-land !
They sleep in unknown graves ;
And had they borne and nursed a band
Of ingrates, or of slaves,
They had not been more neglected !
But their graves shall yet be found,
And their monuments dot here and there
"The Dark and Bloody Ground."

William D. Gallagher.

"WEAR NO ARMOR."

(From "Alice of Monmouth.")

WEAR no armor, timid heart ;
Fear no keen misfortune's dart,
Want, nor scorn, nor secret blow
Dealt thee by thy mortal foe.

II.

Let the fates their weapons wield,
For a wondrous woven shield
Shall be given thee, ere long.
Mesh of gold were not so strong ;
Not so soft were silken shred ;
Not so fine the spider's thread
Barring the enchanted door
In that tale of ancient lore,
Guarding, silently and well,
All within the mystic cell.
Such a shield, where'er thou art,
Shall be thine, O wounded heart !
From the ills that compass thee,
Thou behind it shall be free ;
Envy, slander, malice, all
Shall withdraw them from thy—Pall.

III.

Build no house with patient care,
Fair to view, and strong as fair ;
Walled with noble deeds' renown ;
Shining over field and town,
Seen from land and sea afar,
Proud in peace, secure in war,

For the moments never sleep,
Building thee a castle-keep—
Proof alike 'gainst heat and cold,
Earthly sorrows manifold,
Sickness, failure of thine ends,
And the falling off of friends.
Treason, want, dishonor, wrong,
None of these shall harm thee long.
Every day a beam is made ;
Hour by hour a stone is laid,
Back the cruellest shall fall
From the warder at the wall ;
Foeman shall not dare to tread
On the ramparts o'er thy head ;
Dark, triumphant flags shall wave
From the fastness of thy—Grave.

Edmund C. Stedman.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER.

Oh ! was ye ne'er a shool-boy ?
And did you never train,
And feel that swelling of the heart
You cannot feel again ?
Didst never meet, far down the street,
With plumes and banners gay,
While the kettle, for the kettle-drum
Played your march, march away ?

It seems to me but yesterday,
Nor scarce so long ago,

Since we shouldered our muskets
To charge the fearful foe.
Our muskets were of cedar wood,
With ramrod bright and new ;
With bayonet forever set,
And painted barrel too.

We charged upon a flock of geese,
And put them all to flight,
Except one sturdy gander
That thought to show us fight :
But, ah ! we knew a thing or two ;
Our captain wheeled the van—
We routed him, we scouted him,
Nor lost a single man.

Our captain was as brave a lad
As e'er commission bore ;
All brightly shone his good tin sword,
And a paper cap he wore ;
He led us up the hillside,
Against the western wind,
While the cockerel plume that decked his head
Streamed bravely out behind.

We shouldered arms, we carried arms,
We charged the bayonet ;
And woe unto the muilen stalk
That in our course we met.
At two o'clock the roll was called,
And, till the close of day, .
With our brave and plumed captain
We fought the mimic fray,—

When the supper-bell we knew so well
Came stealing up from out the dell,
For our march, march away.

James H. Perkins.

THE WEAVER.

A WEAVER sat by the side of his loom,
A-flinging his shuttle fast ;
And a thread that would wear till the hour of doom
Was added at every cast.

His warp had been by the angels spun,
And his weft was bright as new
Like threads which the morning unbraids from the sun,
All jewelled over with dew.

And fresh-lipped, bright-eyed, beautiful flowers
In the rich, soft web were bedded ;
And blithe to the weaver sped onward the hours :
Not yet were Time's feet leaded !

But something there came slow stealing by,
And a shade on the fabric fell ;
And I saw that the shuttle less blithely did fly—
For Thought hath a wearisome spell !

And a thread that next o'er the warp was lain,
Was of melancholy gray ;
And anon I marked there a tear-drop's stain,
Where the flowers had fallen away.

But still the weaver kept weaving on,
Though the fabric all was gray;
And the flowers, and the buds, and the leaves, were gone,
And the gold threads cankered lar.

And dark—and still darker—and darker grew
Each newly woven thread;
And some there were of a death-mocking hue.
And some of a bloody red.

And things all strange were woven in—
Sighs, and down-crushed hopes, and fears;
And the web was broken, and poor, and thin,
And it dripped with living tears.

And the weaver fain would have flung it aside,
But he knew it would be a sin;
So in light and in gloom the shuttle he plied,
A-weaving these life-cords in.

And as he wove, and, weeping, still wove,
A tempter stole him nigh;
And, with glozing words, he to win him strove—
But the weaver turned his eye.

He upward turned his eye to heaven,
And still wove on—on—on!
Till the last, last cord from his heart was riven,
And the tissue strange was done.

Then he threw it about his shoulders bowed,
And about his grizzled head;
And, gathering close the folds of his shroud,
Laid him down among the dead.

And I after saw, *in a robe of light*,
The weaver in the sky :
The angels' wings were not more bright,
And the stars grew pale it nigh.

And I saw, mid the folds, all the iris-hued flowers
That beneath his touch had sprung ;
More beautiful far than these stray ones of ours,
Which the angels have to us flung.

And wherever a tear had fallen down,
Gleamed out a diamond rare ;
And jewels befitting a monarch's crown
Were the footprints left by Care.

And wherever had swept the breath of a sigh,
Was left a rich perfume ;
And with light from the fountain of bliss in the sky
Shone the labor of Sorrow and Gloom.

And then I prayed, " When my last work is done,
And the silver life-cord riven,
Be the stain of Sorrow the deepest one
That I bear with me to heaven !"

Emily Judson.

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE.

WOODMAN, spare that tree !
Touch not a single bough !
In youth it sheltered me,
And I'll protect it now.

'Twas my forefather's hand
That placed it near his cot ;
There, woodman, let it stand—
Thy axe shall harm it not !

That old familiar tree,
Whose glory and renown
Are spread o'er land and sea,
And wouldst thou hew it down ?
Woodman, forbear thy stroke !
Cut not its earth-bound ties ;
Oh, spare that aged oak,
Now towering to the skies !

When but an idle boy,
I sought its grateful shade ;
In all their gushing joy
Here too my sisters played.
My mother kissed me here ;
My father pressed my hand—
Forgive this foolish tear,
But let that old oak stand !

My heart-strings round thee cling
Close as thy bark, old friend !
Here shall the wild-bird sing,
And still thy branches bend.
Old tree ! the storm still brave !
And, woodman, leave the spot ;
While I've a hand to save,
Thy axe shall harm it not !

George P. Morris.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

I LOVE to look at a scene like this,
Of wild and careless play
And persuade myself that I am not old,
And my locks are not yet gray ;
For it stirs the blood in an old man's heart,
And makes his pulses fly,
To catch the thrill of a happy voice,
And the sight of a pleasant eye.

I have walked the world for four-score years,
And they say that I am old—
That my heart is ripe for the reaper Death,
And my years are well nigh told.
It is very true—it is very true—
I am old, and I “bide my time ;”
But my heart will leap at a scene like this,
And I half renew my prime.

Play on ! Play on ! I am with you there,
In the midst of your merry ring ;
I can feel the thrill of the daring jump,
And the rush of the breathless swing.
I hide with you in the fragrant hay,
And I whoop the smothered call,
And my feet slip up on the seedy floor,
And I care not for the fall.

I am willing to die when my time shall come,
And I shall be glad to go—
For the world at best is a dreary place,
And my pulse is getting low ;





But the grave is dark, and the heart will fail
In treading its gloomy way ;
And it wiles my heart from its dreariness
To see the young so gay.

N. P. Willis.

SNOW.

THE snow that threatened to fall
Has fallen the livelong night ;
The hills, the hollows, the plains,
Are white, nothing but white.

The men are out on the lawn,
Clearing away the snow,
Shouting with all their might,
Hailing the farm below.

The road is alive with sleighs,
Beaux from the neighboring dells,
Dashing away in style
With beves of rustic bells.

Away on the frozen pond,
Touched with the morning's red,
The idle men of the town,
Are skating with arms outspread.

The children going to school,
With slates, and satchels of books,
Pelt each other along,
And slide on the sideway brooks.

And a string of the larger boys,
Dragging their sleds behind,
Are climbing, and coasting down
The hills, with the speed of wind!

And as far as the eye can reach,
Stretching away from sight,
The world is buried in snow,
White, nothing but white!

THE FAMILY MEETING.

WE are all here!
Father, mother,
Sister brother,
All who hold each other dear;
Each chair is filled—we're all *at home*;
To-night let no cold stranger come:
It is not often thus around
Our old familiar hearth we're found:
Bless, then, the meeting and the spot,
For once be every care forgot;
Let gentle Peace assert her power,
And kind Affection rule the hour;
We're all—all here.

We're *not* all here!
Some are away—the dead ones dear,
Who thronged with us this ancient hearth,
And gave the hour to guiltless mirth.
Fate with a stern, relentless hand,
Looked in and thinned our little band:

Some like a night-flash passed away,
And some sank, lingering, day by day;
The quiet graveyard—some lie there—
And cruel Ocean has his share—

We're *not* all here.

We *are* all here!

Even they—the dead—though dead, so dear;
Fond Memory, to her duty true,
Brings back their faded forms to view.
How life-like, through the mist of years,
Each well-remembered face appears!
We see them as in times long past;
From each to each kind looks are cast;
We hear their words, their smiles behold;
They're round us as they were of old—

We *are* all here.

We are all here!

Father, mother,

Sister, brother,

You that I love with love so dear.

This may not long of us be said;

Soon must we join the gathered dead;

And by the hearth we now sit round,

Some other circle will be found.

Oh! then, that wisdom may we know

Which yields a life of peace below!

So, in the world to follow this,

May each repeat, in words of bliss,

"We're all—all *here*!"

Charles Sprague.

THE MAIZE.

A song for the plant of my own native West,
Where nature and freedom reside,
By plenty still crowned and by peace ever blessed,
To the corn! the green corn of her pride!
In the climes of the East has the olive been sung,
And the grape been the theme of their lays;
But for thee shall a harp of the backwoods be strung,
Thou bright, ever-beautiful Maize!

Afar in the forest where rude cabins rise,
And send up their pillars of smoke,
And the tops of their columns are lost in the skies,
O'er the heads of the cloud-kissing oak—
Near the skirt of the grove, where the sturdy arm
 swings
The axe till the old giant sways,
And echo repeats every blow as it rings,
Shoots the green and the glorious Maize!

There buds of the buckeye in spring are the first,
And the willow's gold hair then appears,
And snowy the cups of the dogwood that burst
By the red-bud, with pink tinted tears;
And striped the bowls which the poplar holds up
For the dew and the sun's yellow rays,
And brown is the pawpaw's shade-blossoming cup,
In the wood, near the sun-loving Maize!

When through the dark soil the bright steel of the
 plough
Turns the mould from its unbroken bed,

The ploughman is cheered by the finch on the bough,
And the black-bird doth follow his tread.
And idle, afar on the landscape descried,
The deep-lowing kine slowly graze,
And nibbling the grass on the sunny hillside
Are the sheep, hedged away from the Maize.

With spring-time, and culture, in martial array
It waves its green broad swords on high,
And fights with the gale, in a fluttering fray,
And the sunbeams, which fall from the sky—
It strikes its green blades at the zephyrs at noon,
And at night at the swift-flying fays,
Who ride through the darkness the beams of the moon,
Through the spears and the flags of the Maize.

When summer is fierce still its banners are green,
Each warrior's long beard groweth red,
His emerald-bright sword is sharp-pointed and keen,
And golden his tassel-plumed head ;
As a host of armed knights set a monarch at naught,
They defy the day-god to his gaze ;
And, revived every morn from the battle that's fought,
Fresh stand the green ranks of the Maize !

But brown comes the autumn, and sere grows the corn,
And the woods like a rainbow are dressed,
And but for the cock and the noontide's clear horn,
Old Time would be tempted to rest ;
The humming-bee fans off a shower of gold
From the mullen's long rod as it sways,
And dry grow the leaves which protecting enfold
The ears of the well-ripened Maize.

At length Indian Summer, the lovely, doth come,
With its blue frosty nights, and days still,
When distantly clear sounds the waterfall's hum,
And the sun smokes ablaze on the hill!
A dim veil hangs over the landscape and flood,
And the hills are all mellowed in haze,
While fall creeping on, like a monk 'neath his hood,
Plucks the thick rustling wealth of the Maize.

And the heavy wains creak to the barns large and gray,
Where the treasure securely we hold,
Housed safe from the tempest, dry sheltered away,
Our blessing more precious than gold!
And long for this manna that springs from the sod,
Shall we gratefully give Him the praise,
The source of all bounty, our Father and God,
Who sent us from heaven the Maize!

William W. Fosdick.

BALLAD OF JESSIE CAROL

I.

At her window, Jessie Carol,
As the twilight dew distils,
Pushes back her heavy tresses,
Listening toward the northern hills,
"I am happy, very happy,
None so much as I am blest;
None of all the many maidens
In the valley of the West,"
Softly to herself she whispered;
Paused she then again to hear

If the step of Allen Archer,
That she waited for, were near.
"Ah, he knows I love him fondly!—
I have never told him so!—
Heart of mine, be not so heavy,
He will come to-night, I know."
Brightly is the full moon filling
All the withered woods with light;
"He has not forgotten surely—
It was later yesternight!"
Shadows interlock with shadows—
Says the maiden, "Woe is me!"
In the blue the eve-star trembles
Like a lily in the sea.
Yet a good hour later sounded,—
But the northern woodlands sway—
Quick a white hand from her casement
Thrust the heavy vines away.
Like the wings of restless swallows
That a moment brush the dew,
And again are up and upward,
Till we lose them in the blue,
Were the thoughts of Jessie Carol,—
For a moment dim with pain,
Then with pleasant waves of sunshine,
On the hills of hope again.
"Selfish am I, weak and selfish,"
Said she, "thus to sit and sigh;
Other friends and other pleasures
Claim his leisure well as I.
Haply, care or bitter sorrow
'Tis that keeps him from my side,

Else he surely would have hasted
Hither at the twilight tide.
Yet, sometimes I can but marvel
That his lips have never said,
When we talked about the future,
Then, or then, we shall be wed !
Much I fear me that my nature
Cannot measure half his pride,
And perchance he would not wed me
Though I pined of love and died.
To the aims of his ambition
I would bring nor wealth nor fame.
Well, there is a quiet valley
Where we both shall sleep the same !”
So, more eves than I can number,
Now despairing, and now blest,
Watched the gentle Jessie Carol
From the Valley of the West.

II.

Down along the dismal woodland
Blew October's yellow leaves,
And the day had waned and faded,
To the saddest of all eves.
Poison rods of scarlet berries
Still were standing here and there,
But the clover blooms were faded,
And the orchard boughs were bare.
From the stubble-fields the cattle
Winding homeward, playful, slow,
With their slender horns of silver
Pushed each other to and fro

Suddenly the hound upspringing
 ' From his sheltering kennel, whined,
As the voice of Jessie Carol
 Backward drifted on the wind—
Backward drifted from a pathway
 Sloping down the upland wild,
Where she walked with Allen Archer,
 Light of spirit as a child !
All her young heart wild with rapture
 And the bliss that made it beat—
Not the golden wells of Hybla
 Held a treasure half so sweet !
But as oft the shifting rose-cloud,
 In the sunset light that lies,
Mournful makes us, feeling only
 How much farther are the skies,—
So the mantling of her blushes,
 And the trembling of her heart
'Neath his steadfast eyes, but made her
 Feel how far they were apart.
“Allen,” said she, “I will tell you
 Of a vision that I had—
All the livelong night I dreamed it,
 And it made me very sad.
We were walking slowly, seaward,
 In the twilight—you and I—
Through a break of clearest azure
 Shone the moon—as now—on high ;
Though I nothing said to vex you,
 O'er your forehead came a frown,
And I strove but could not soothe you—
 Something kept my full heart down ;

When, before us, stood a lady
In the moonlight's pearly beam,
Very tall, and proud, and stately—
(Allen, this was in my dream!)—
Looking down, I thought, upon me,
Half in pity, half in scorn,
Till my soul grew sick with wishing
That I never had been born.
'Cover me from woe and madness!
Cried I to the ocean flood,
As she locked her milk-white fingers
In between us where we stood,—
All her flood of midnight tresses
Softly gathered from their flow,
By her crown of bridal beauty,
Paler than the winter snow.
Striking then my hands together,
O'er the tumult of my breast,—
All the beauty waned and faded
From the Valley of the West!"
In the beard of Allen Archer
Twisted then his fingers white,
As he said, "My gentle Jessie,
You must not be sad to-night;
You must not be sad, my Jessie—
You are over kind and good,
And I fain would make you happy,
Very happy—if I could!"
Oft he kissed her cheek and forehead,
Called her darling oft, but said
Never that he loved her fondly,
Or that ever they should wed;

But that he was grieved that shadows
Should have chilled so dear a heart;
That the time foretold so often
Then was come—and they must part!
Shook her bosom then with passion,
Hot her forehead burned with pain,
But her lips said only, “Allen,
Will you ever come again?”
And he answered, lightly dallying
With her tresses all the while,
Life had not a star to guide him
Like the beauty of her smile;
And that when the corn was ripened
And the vintage harvest pressed,
She would see him home returning
To the Valley of the West.

When the moon had veiled her splendor,
And went lessening down the blue,
And along the eastern hill-tops
Burned the morning in the dew,
They had parted—each one feeling
That their lives had separate ends;
They had parted—neither happy—
Less than lovers—more than friends.
For as Jessie mused in silence,
She remembered that he said,
Never, that he loved her fondly,
Or that ever they should wed.
’Twas full many a nameless meaning
My poor words can never say,
Felt without the need of utterance,
That had won her heart away.

Oh, the days were weary ! weary !
And the eves were dull and long,
With the cricket's chirp of sorrow,
And the owlet's mournful song.
But in slumber oft she started
In the still and lonesome nights,
Hearing but the traveller's footstep
Hurrying toward the village lights.

So moaned by the dreary winter—
All her household tasks fulfilled—
Till beneath the last year's rafters
Came the swallows back to build.
Meadow pinks, like flakes of crimson,
Over all the valleys lay,
And again were oxen ploughing
Up and down the hills all day.
Thus the dim days dawned and faded
To the maid, forsaken, lorn,
Till the freshening breeze of summer
Shook the tassels of the corn.
Ever now within her chamber
All night long the lamp-light shines,
But no white hand from her casement
Pushes back the heavy vines.
On her cheek a fire was feeding,
And her hand transparent grew—
Ah, the faithless Allen Archer !
More than she had dreamed was true.

No complaint was ever uttered,
Only to herself she sighed—

As she read of wretched poets
Who had pined of love and died.
Once she crushed the sudden crying
From her trembling lips away,
When they said the vintage harvest
Had been gathered in that day.
Often, when they kissed her, smiled she,
Saying that it soothed her pain,
And that they must not be saddened—
She would soon be well again !
Thus nor hoping nor yet fearing,
Meekly bore she all her pain,
Till the red leaves of the autumn
Withered from the woods again ;
Till the bird had hushed its singing
In the silvery sycamore,
And the nest was left unsheltered
In the lilac by the door ;
Saying still, that she was happy—
None so much as she was blest --
None, of all the many maidens
In the Valley of the West.

III.

Down the heath and o'er the moorland
Blows the wild gust high and higher,
Suddenly the maiden pauses
Spinning at the cabin fire,
And quick from her taper fingers
Falls away the flaxen thread,
As some neighbor entering, whispers,
"Jessie Carol lieth dead."

Then, as pressing close her forehead
To the window-pane she sees
Two stout men together digging
Underneath the church-yard trees.
And she asks, in kindest accents,
“Was she happy when she died?”—
Sobbing all the while to see them
Void the heavy earth aside;
Or, upon their mattocks leaning,
Through their fingers numb to blow,
For the wintry air is chilly,
And the grave-mounds white with snow;
And the neighbor answers, softly,
“Do not, dear one, do not cry;
At the break of day she asked us
If we thought that she must die;
And when I had told her, sadly,
That I feared it would be so,
Smiled she, saying, “‘Twill be weary
Digging in the church-yard snow!”
‘Earth,’ I said, ‘was very dreary—
That its paths at best were rough;’
And she whispered, she was ready,
That her life was long enough.
So she lay serene and silent,
Till the wind, that wildly drove,
Soothed her from her mortal sorrow,
Like the lullaby of love.”
Thus they talked, while one that loved her
Smoothed her tresses dark and long,
Wrapped her white shroud down, and simply
Wove her sorrow to this song!

. IV.

Sweetly sleeps she ! pain and passion
Burn no longer on her brow—
Weary watchers, ye may leave her—
She will never need you now !
While the wild spring bloomed and faded,
Till the autumn came and passed,
Calmly, patiently, she waited—
Rest has come to her at last !
Never have the blessèd angels,
As they walked with her apart,
Kept pale Sorrow's battling armies
Half so softly from her heart.
Therefore, think not, ye that loved her,
Of the pallor hushed and dread,
Where the winds, like heavy mourners,
Cry about her lonesome bed ;
But of white hands softly reaching
As the shadows o'er her fell,
Downward from the golden bastion
Of the eternal citadel.

Alice Cary.

DEAR MOTHER, WAS IT RIGHT ?

To the grove beyond the meadow
Where the stream goes rippling by,
In the twilight, yester even,
Wandered young Glennhold and I ;

And when the twilight deepened
Into the shades of night,
Still in the grove we lingered :
Dear mother, was it right ?

Was it right, my dearest mother,
As we wandered thus along,
For his arm to be around me ?
I'm sure he meant no harm ;
And when a flitting cloud, mother
Had hid the moon's pale light,
His lips he pressed to mine :
Oh, tell me, was it right ?

Should I have then repulsed him,
When he promised to be true ?
In such an hour, dear mother,
What should a maiden do ?
My heart was wildly beating,
As if with sore affright—
Yet I felt more joy than sadness :
Dear mother, was it right ?

Was it right that I should tell him
I would love him all my life,
And both in joy and sorrow
Prove a true and loving wife ?
And now, dear mother, tell me,
And make me happy quite,
If I did not yester e'en
Act womanlike and right ?

Alfred Burnett

THE STRAWBERRY-PICKERS.

[FROM "ALICE OF MONMOUTH"]

THE strawberry-vines lie in the sun,
Their myriad tendrils twined in one;
Spread like a carpet of richest dyes,
The strawberry-field in sunshine lies.
Each timorous berry, blushing red,
Has folded the leaves above her head,
The dark, green curtains gemmed with dew;
But each blushful berry, peering through,
Shows like a flock of the underthread—
The crimson woof of a downy cloth
Where the elves may kneel and plight their troth.

II.

Run through the rustling vines, to show
Each picker an even space to go,
Leaders of twinkling cord divide
The field in lanes from side to side;
And here and there, with patient care,
Lifting the leafage everywhere,
Rural maidens and mothers dot
The velvet of the strawberry-plot:
Fair and freckled, old and young,
With baskets at their girdles hung,
Searching the plants with no rude haste—
Lest berries should hang unpicked, and waste,
Of the pulpy, odorous, hidden quest,
First gift of the fruity months, and best.

III.

Crates of the laden baskets cool
Under the trees at the meadow's edge,
Covered with grass and dripping sedge,
And lily-leaves from the shaded pool;
Filled, and ready to be borne
To market before the morrow morn.
Beside them, gazing at the skies,
Hour after hour a young man lies.
From the hill-side, under the trees,
He looks across the field, and sees
The waves that ever beyond it climb
Whitening the rye-slope's early prime;
At times he listens, listlessly,
To the tree-toad singing in the tree,
Or sees the cat-bird peck his fill
With feathers adroop and roguish bill.
But often, with a pleased unrest,
He lifts his glances to the west,
Watching the kirtles, red and blue,
Which cross the meadow in his view;
And he hears anon the busy throng
Sing the Strawberry-Pickers' Song:

IV.

"Rife the sweets our meadows bear,
Ere the day has reached its noonning;
While the skies are fair, and the morning air
Awakens the thrush's tuning.
Softly the rivulet's ripples flow;
Dark is the grove that lovers know;
Here, where the whitest blossoms blow,
The reddest and ripest berries grow.

"Bend to the crimson fruit, whose stain
 Is glowing on lips and fingers ;
 The sun has lain in the leafy plain,
 And the dust of his pinions lingers.
 Softly the rivulet's ripples flow ;
 Dark is the grove that lovers know ;
 Here, where the whitest blossoms blow,
 The reddest and ripest berries grow.

"Gather the cones which lie concealed,
 With their vines your foreheads wreathing ;
 The strawberry-field its sweets shall yield
 While the western winds are breathing.
 Softly the rivulet's ripples flow ;
 Dark is the grove that lovers know ;
 Here, where the whitest blossoms blow,
 The reddest and ripest berries grow."

V.

From the far hill-side comes again
 An echo of the pickers' strain.
 Sweetly the group their cadence keep ;
 Swiftly their hands the trailers sweep ;
 The vines are stripped and the song is sung,
 A joyous labor for old and young—
 For the blithe children, gleaning behind
 The women, marvellous treasures find.

VI.

From the workers a maiden parts :
 The baskets at her waistband shine
 With berries that look like bleeding hearts
 Of a hundred lovers at her shrine ;

No Eastern girl were girdled so well
With silken belt and silvery bell.
Her slender form is tall and strong;
Her voice was the sweetest in the song;
Her brown hair, fit to wear a crown,
Loose from its bonnet ripples down.
Toward the crates, that lie in the shade
Of the chestnut-copse at the edge of the glade,
She moves from her mates, through happy rows
Of the children loving her as she goes.
"Alice, *our* Alice!" one and all,
Striving to stay her footsteps, call
(For children, with skilful choice, dispense
The largesse of their innocence);
But on, with a sister's smile, she moves
Into the darkness of the groves,
And deftly, daintily, one by one,
Shelters her baskets from the sun,
Under the network, fresh and cool,
Of lily-leaves from the crystal pool.

Edmund C. Stedman

SWEET HOME.

Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home! home, sweet home!
There's no place like home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain—
 Oh, give me my lowly thatched cottage again;
 The birds singing gayly, that come at my call:
 Give me these, and the peace of mind, dearer than all.

Home! sweet, sweet home!
 There's no place like home!

John Howard Payne.

EQUALITY.

Most favored lady in the land,
 I well can bear your scorn or pride;
 For in all truest wealth, to-day,
 I stand an equal by your side!
 No better parentage have you—
 One is our Father, one our Friend;
 The same inheritance awaits
 Our claiming, at the journey's end.
 No broader flight your thought can take—
 Faith on no firmer basis rest;
 Nor can the dreams of fancy wake
 A sweeter tumult in your breast.
 You may have lovers, many score,
 To follow always at your call;
 I have one friend, so good and true,
 I would not give him for them all.
 And in your most triumphant hour—
 O beauty's perfect consciousness—
 When thousand lips have praised your face,
 Or the rich flowings of your dress,

You cannot know the quiet joy,
With which one friend my heart can thrill,
When I have made some simple dress
To wear, and he has praised my skill!

Life may bring to you every good
Which from a Father's hand can fall;
But if true lips have said to me,
"I love you," I have known it all!

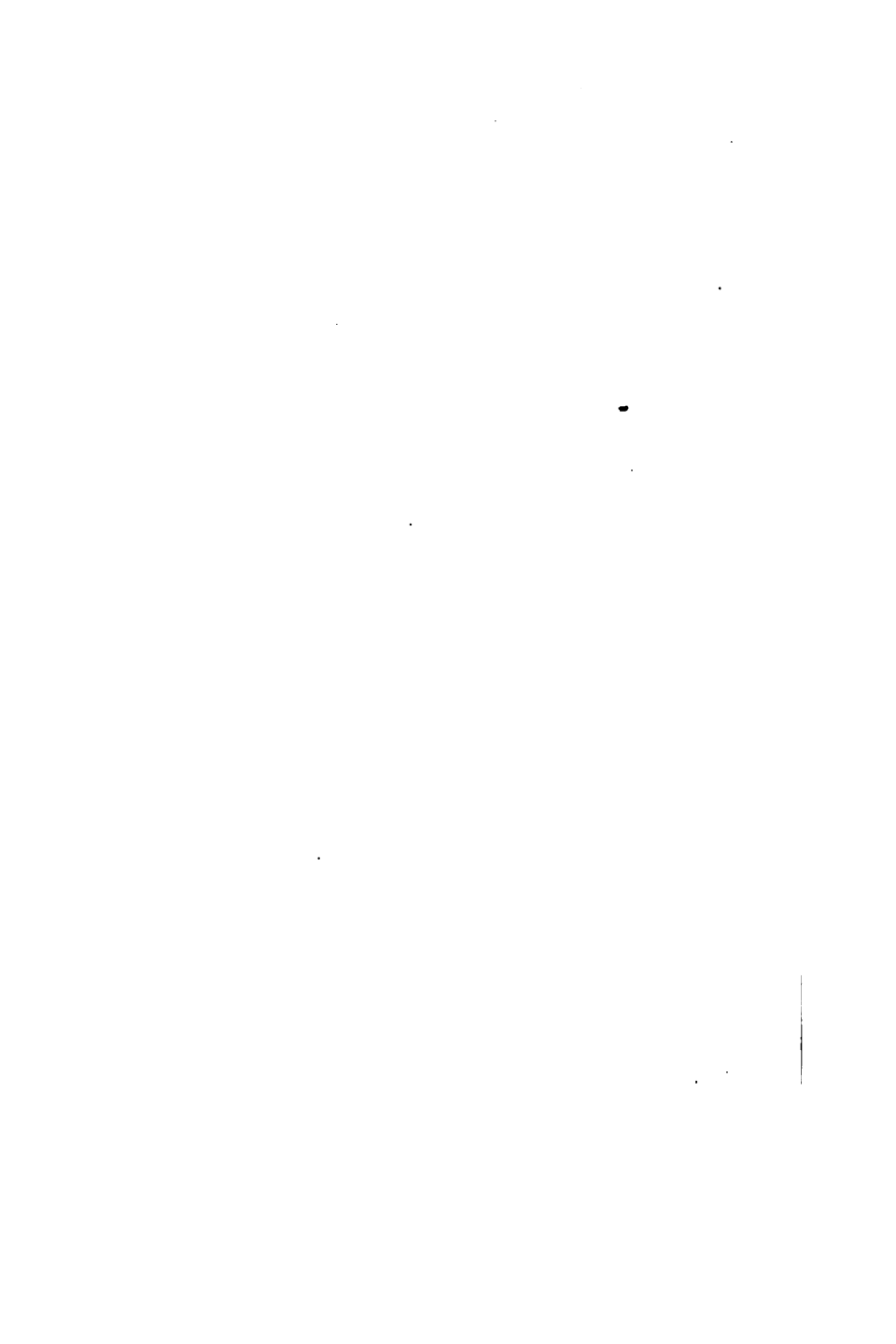
Phæbe Cary.

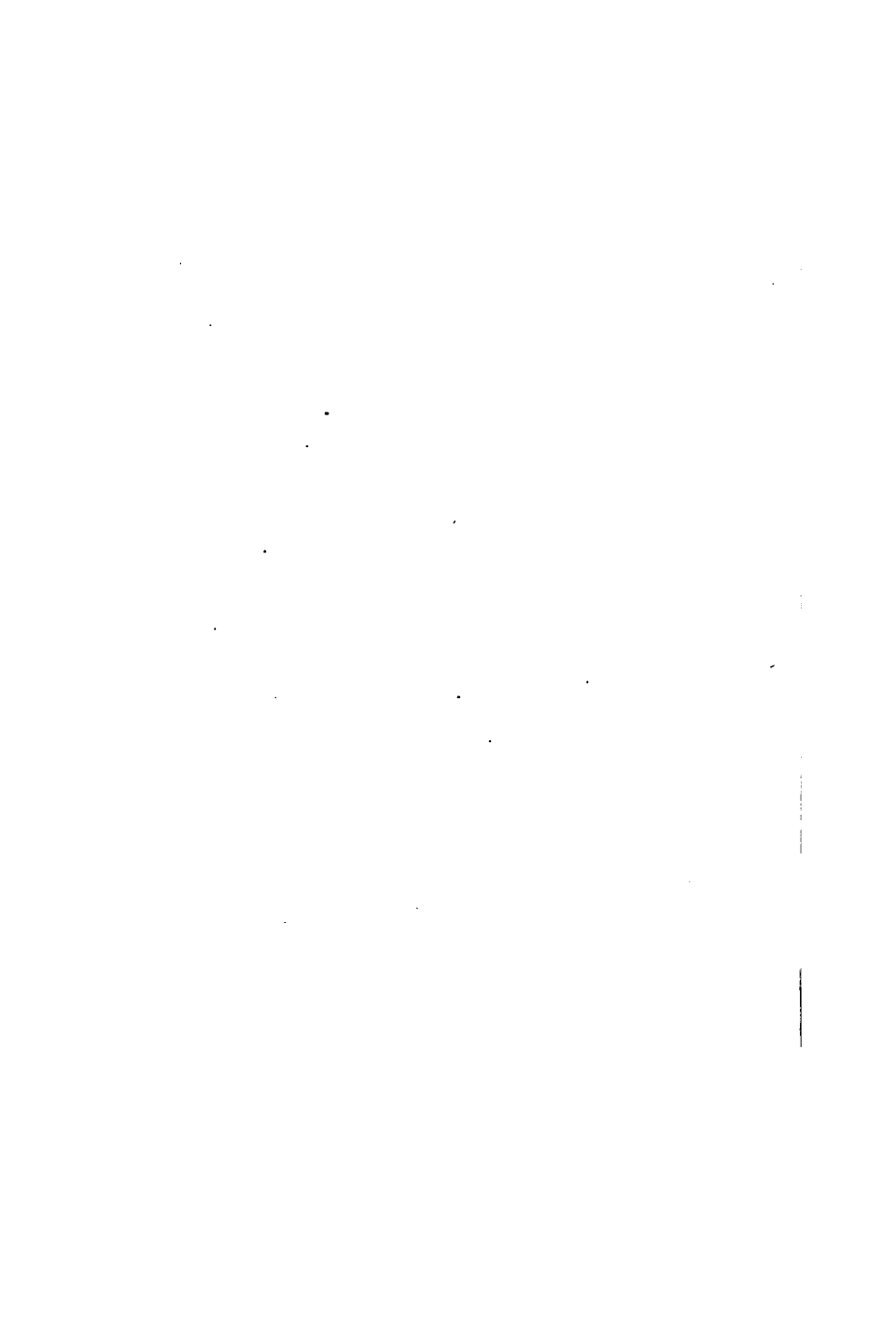
HOPE ON, HOPE EVER.

HOPE on, hope ever; if thy lot
Be forlorn and lowly,
Thou mayst gain a brighter spot,
Though thy steps move slowly.
Reckless of the rich man's scorn,
On thyself relying,
Strive to win, though lowly born,
Name, renown undying.
In the path that heaven assigned,
Rest thee idly never;
Work with might, and soul, and mind,
And hope on, hope ever.

Hope on, hope ever, while the day
On thy path is shining:
Let no moment bear away
Murmurs of repining.

Sarah T. Bolton.





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